

The Dialogue in Hell or the Protocols?

From the Lecture Series: The Real History of Secret Societies

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There were many similarities between the Protocols and *The Dialogue in Hell between Machiavelli and Montesquieu*. Were these similarities merely limited to mutually shared interest and plagiarism, or was there more to this than meets the eye?



It's highly likely that Maurice Joly wrote the Protocols to attack the former friend-turned-enemy Adolphe Crémieux. (Image: JenWalters/Shutterstock)

The Revision of the Protocols' Date

Italian researcher Cesare de Michelis found that the first version of Protocols appeared in 1903, and not 1905. It appeared in a small St. Petersburg paper called *Znamya*, which was a mouthpiece for violently anti-Semitic groups known as the Black Hundreds. Even the

common portrait of the Protocols supposed publisher, Sergei Nilus, is wrong.

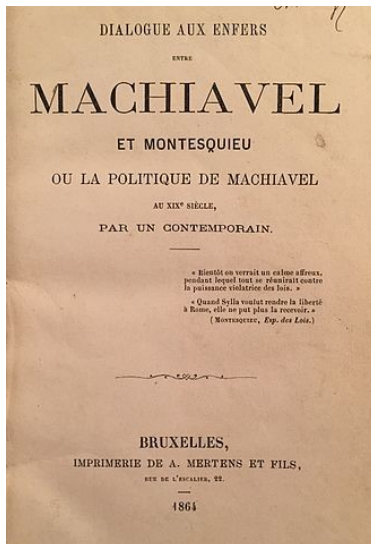
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The Publisher of Protocols: Sergei Nilus

Sergei Nilus was not a monk, nor a bearded mystic, nor a strange hermit. The Protocols he published in 1905 formed only a chapter of his book. About 40% of the Protocols are indeed lifted—or paraphrased—from *The Dialogue in Hell between Machiavelli and Montesquieu*, written in the late 19th century by the Frenchman Maurice Joly.

But it's not simple cut-and-paste plagiarism. More than 300 separate bits and pieces of Joly's work—a paragraph here, a phrase there; mostly a sentence or two—are scattered unevenly throughout the document.

Maurice Joly



Maurice Joly wrote *The Dialogue in Hell between Machiavelli and Montesquieu*. (Image: Svarshavsky/CC BY-SA/Public domain)

Maurice Joly was the author of *The Dialogue in Hell between Machiavelli and Montesquieu*.

He was a Parisian attorney and a frustrated office-seeker. Joly worked in Emperor Napoleon III's government for a decade without receiving the recognition and advancement he craved. That turned Joly from a

loyal servant into a bitter enemy. He wrote the dialogues as a personal attack on Napoleon III.

Joly seems to have been a quarrelsome and vindictive person. He challenged enemies to duels and went to jail for assault.

The Relation between Maurice Joly and Adolphe Crémieux

One of Joly's friends and a mentor was a fellow-lawyer Adolphe Crémieux. They shared an abiding hatred for Napoleon III. But they later fell out—as Joly did with almost everyone, sooner or later. Crémieux went on to play an important part in the French Third Republic, while Joly didn't.

Adolphe Crémieux was Jewish and head of France's Jewish organization, the Alliance Israélite Universelle. Crémieux was also a Freemason. In fact, he was master of the Grand Orient Lodge—France's largest Masonic body. Moreover, Crémieux was simultaneously head of the Masonic Scottish Rite in France, and he organized a Scottish Rite 'supreme council' in Switzerland.

Something often ignored or glossed over in discussions about the Protocols is that they don't just describe a Jewish conspiracy but a Judeo-Masonic one. The original 1903 version is clearly titled *The Protocols of the Sessions of the World Alliance of Freemasonry and the Sages of Zion*. Masonic lodges are described as the main front for the elders' secret society.

*This is a transcript from the video series **The Real History of Secret Societies**. [Watch it now, on Wondrium](#).*

Shishmareff's Story of the Protocol

Another story of the Protocols, aside from the Okhrana one, was popularized by the American writer Paquita de Shishmareff. She wrote under the pen name Leslie Fry. She was the widow of a Russian officer killed fighting the Bolsheviks. Shishmareff believed that the Protocols was an evidence of a vast Jewish plot to destroy Christian civilization. In April 1921, Shishmareff published an article identifying the author of the Protocols as Jewish Zionist writer Asher Zvi Ginsberg, which came as a big surprise to Ginsberg.

Worse, Shishmareff's tale was picked up and spread by other anti-Semitic writers. Ginsberg sued one for libel and forced him to recant.

But Shishmareff was undeterred. She even concocted an elaborate 'Politico-Occult-Judaeo Masonic Chart' to track the conspiracy. And in 1931, she published her magnum opus, *Waters Flowing Eastward*.

In this book, Shishmareff offered yet another version of the Protocols' origins. Her tale starts in 1884. According to this, a Russian noblewoman and secret agent named Justine Glinka obtained a copy of the Protocols stolen from a Masonic Lodge in Paris. Glinka then purportedly gave the manuscript to her uncle, General P. V. Orzhevsky, who tried—and failed—to show it to Tsar Alexander III.

Eventually, Glinka's stolen manuscript made its way to Sergei Nilus who published it in his 1905 book. But this tale, like the Okhrana one, again stumbles on the inconvenient fact that the Protocols had already appeared in print in 1903. Were there more than one prototype of the Protocols floating around?

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Yuliana Glinka: The Anonymous Lady



Justine Glinka supplied the copy of the Protocols to Sergei Nilus. (Image: Unknown author/Public domain)

Justine (or Yuliana) Glinka was real. She came from a Russian military family and was herself a devout spiritualist and close friend of theosophy founder, Madame Helena Blavatsky. Glinka also served as a maid of honor to the wife of assassinated Tsar Alexander II.

Justine Glinka was almost certainly the 'anonymous lady' who supplied the copy of the Protocols that ended up in the hands of Sergei Nilus.

Final Hypothesis

Finally, the most likely hypothesis of all the hypotheses is that it was Maurice Joly who penned the Dialogue. Basically, Joly plagiarized himself. Or more accurately, he adapted his previous work for a new purpose: an attack on his former friend-turned-enemy Adolphe Crémieux.

Recall that Crémieux was one of France's most prominent Jews and Freemasons. The biggest clue may be the 'signature' that comes at the close of the Protocols: 'by the representatives of Zion, of the 33rd degree'. The 33rd degree exists only in Scottish Rite Masonry, and Crémieux was closely associated with the Scottish Rite.

It is reasonable to suspect that Joly concocted an original draft of the Protocols shortly before his suicide, or murder, in 1878. This draft could be what fell into General Orzhevsky's hands a few years later. Or it may have ended-up with Joly's son, Charles Joly, who later worked beside Golovinsky, Manasevich, and other potential conspirators. But, will we ever know the complete truth?

Common Questions about the Dialogue in Hell or the Protocols?

Q: Who first published the Protocols?

The first version of the Protocols appeared in 1903, and not 1905. But, the more popular version is the 1905 one, published by Sergei Nilus.

Q: Who is Maurice Joly?

Maurice Joly is the author of *The Dialogue in Hell between Machiavelli and Montesquieu* from which certain parts of the Protocols are plagiarized.

Q: Who wrote the Protocols of the Elders of the Zion?

There is no credible source that informs us about the author of the Protocols of the Elders of the Zion. However, it's quite likely that the book was written by Maurice Joly, the author of *The Dialogue in Hell between Machiavelli and Montesquieu*.

Q: Is the Protocols a valid document?

Although the Protocols is a real document published in 1905, its story has been debunked as a forgery by many sources, including *The Times*.

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Protocols of the Elders of Zion

The *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* is the most notorious and widely distributed antisemitic publication of modern times. Its lies about Jews, which have been repeatedly discredited, continue to circulate today, especially on the internet. The individuals and groups who have used the *Protocols* are all linked by a common purpose: to spread hatred of Jews.

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"If ever a piece of writing could produce mass hatred, it is this one. . . . This book is about lies and slander."
—Elie Wiesel, Nobel Peace Prize Laureate

[Protocols of the Elders of Zion](#)

The Protocols of the Elders of Zion is the most notorious and widely distributed antisemitic publication of modern times. Its lies about Jews, which have been repeatedly discredited, continue to circulate today, especially on the Internet. The individuals and groups who have used the *Protocols* are all linked by a common purpose: to spread hatred of Jews.

The *Protocols* is entirely a work of fiction, intentionally written to blame Jews for a variety of ills. Those who distribute it claim that it documents a Jewish conspiracy to dominate the world. The conspiracy and its alleged leaders, the so-called Elders of Zion, never existed.

The Origin of a Lie

In 1903, portions of *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* were serialized in a Russian newspaper, *Znamya* (The Banner). The version of the *Protocols* that has endured and has been translated into dozens of languages, however, was first published in Russia in 1905 as an appendix to *The Great in the Small: The Coming of the Anti-Christ and the Rule of Satan on Earth*, by Russian writer and mystic Sergei Nilus.

Although the exact origin of the *Protocols* is unknown, its intent was to portray Jews as conspirators against the state. In 24 chapters, or protocols, allegedly minutes from meetings of Jewish leaders, the *Protocols* "describes" the "secret plans" of Jews to rule the world by manipulating the economy, controlling the media, and fostering religious conflict.

Following the Russian Revolution of 1917, anti-Bolshevik émigrés brought the *Protocols* to the West. Soon after, editions circulated across Europe, the United States, South America, and Japan. An Arabic translation first appeared in the 1920s.

Beginning in 1920, auto magnate Henry Ford's newspaper, *The Dearborn Independent*, published a series of articles based in part on the *Protocols*. *The International Jew*, the book that included this series, was translated into at least 16 languages. Both [Adolf Hitler](#) and Joseph Goebbels, later head of the [propaganda ministry](#), praised Ford and *The International Jew*.

Fraud Exposed

In 1921, the London *Times* presented conclusive proof that the *Protocols* was a "clumsy plagiarism." The *Times* confirmed that the *Protocols* had been copied in large part from a French political satire that never mentioned Jews—Maurice Joly's *Dialogue in Hell Between Machiavelli and Montesquieu* (1864). Other investigations revealed that one chapter of a Prussian novel, Hermann Goedsche's *Biarritz* (1868), also "inspired" the *Protocols*.

[The Times, August 17, 1921](#)

In 1921, a London *Times* article provided proof exposing the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* as fraudulent. The most widely distributed antisemitic publication of modern times, the *Protocols* falsely purports to be the record of secret meetings of Jewish leaders who were plotting to take over the world. The text has been repeatedly discredited since, but continues to circulate today.

The Nazi Era

Nazi Party ideologue [Alfred Rosenberg](#) introduced Hitler to the *Protocols* during the early 1920s, as Hitler was developing his worldview. Hitler referred to the *Protocols* in some of his early political speeches, and, throughout his career, he exploited the myth that "Jewish-Bolshevists" were conspiring to control the world.

During the 1920s and 1930s, *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* played an important part in the Nazis' [propaganda](#) arsenal. The Nazi party published at least 23 editions of the *Protocols* between 1919 and 1939. Following the Nazis' [seizure of power](#) in 1933, some schools used the *Protocols* to [indoctrinate students](#).

Fraud Exposed

In 1935, a Swiss court fined two Nazi leaders for circulating a German-language edition of the *Protocols* in Berne, Switzerland. The presiding justice at the trial declared the *Protocols* "libelous," "obvious forgeries," and "ridiculous nonsense."

The US Senate issued a report in 1964 declaring that the *Protocols* were "fabricated." The Senate called the contents of the *Protocols* "gibberish" and criticized those who "peddled" the *Protocols* for using the same propaganda technique as Hitler.

In 1993, a Russian court ruled that Pamyat, a far-right nationalist organization, had committed an antisemitic act by publishing the *Protocols*.

Despite these repeated exposures of the *Protocols* as a fraud, it remains the most influential antisemitic text of the past one hundred years, and it continues to appeal to a variety of antisemitic individuals and groups.

The *Protocols* Today

According to the US Department of State's "Report on Global Anti-Semitism" (2004),

"The clear purpose of the [*Protocols* is] to incite hatred of Jews and of Israel."

In the United States and Europe, neo-Nazis, white supremacists, and [Holocaust deniers](#) endorse and circulate the *Protocols*. Books based on the *Protocols* are available worldwide, even in countries with hardly any Jews such as Japan.

Many school textbooks throughout the Arab and Islamic world teach the *Protocols* as fact. Countless political speeches, editorials, and even children's cartoons are derived from the *Protocols*. In 2002, Egypt's government-sponsored television aired a miniseries based on the *Protocols*, an event condemned by the US State Department. The Palestinian organization Hamas draws in part on the *Protocols* to justify its terrorism against Israeli civilians.

The Internet has dramatically increased access to the *Protocols*. Even though many websites expose the *Protocols* as a fraud, the Internet has made it easy to use the *Protocols* to spread hatred of Jews. Today, a typical Internet search yields several hundred thousand sites that disseminate, sell, or debate the *Protocols* or expose them as a fraud.

Author(s): United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Washington, DC